contracted for import from Australia and Canada as on 14.2.1997 as per details given below :

Country	Qty. (in lakh tonnes)	rate in US $ PMT
Australia	10.00	148.00 (FOB)
	3.25	156.00 (FOB)
Canada	2.50	152.50 (FOB)

(b) Government decided to import upto 2 million tonnes of wheat in order to augment domestic availability in view of the decline in production of wheat during 1995-96 by 3.1 million tonnes and the fall in procurement by 4.1 million tonnes during 1996-97. The stock of wheat as on 1.2.1997 in the Central Pool is estimated at 50.80 lakh tonnes (provisional).

(c) The quality specifications of the imported wheat as per the contract are comparable with the uniform specifications prescribed for procurement of indigenous wheat for Central Pool under Price Support Operations.

(d) The imported wheat, alongwith indigenous wheat will form part of the Central Pool and issued under all the schemes of the Government.

Safai Karamcharis

2586. SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the maltreatment being meted out to the Safai Karamcharis in the country;

(b) if so the number of complaints received by the Union Government and the State Government in this regard; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and consolidated report will be laid on the Table of the House.

Port Facilities for Imported Wheat

2587. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether port facility is not adequate enough for the handling of imported wheat;

(b) whether the Governement propose to curtail the import of wheat in view of port problems;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Increase in Prices of Sugar

2588. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to the pressure from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund the Government have been compelled to increase the price of levy sugar from February 10, 1997 and the rise in prices of wheat and rice is on the anvil; and

(b) if so, the reasons for succumbing the pressure of the World Bank and the International Monettary Fund?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

Afforestation

2589. SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the monetary allocation made for afforestation during the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether the amount allocation was fully utilised during the period;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the allocation has been adequately increased in the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Watershed Development Project

2590. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of schemes under the National Watershed Development Project have been taken up in the State of Orissa;

(b) if so, the names of schemes and the amount allotted for each of the schemes; and